

A. Philip Randolph Institute (APRI)  
53rd National Education Conference  
**“All In...Now ‘Til November...and Beyond”**  
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Being “ALL IN” on civil rights means fully committing to the ongoing struggle for equality and justice. It required active participation in advocating for policies and practices that promote fairness, oppose discrimination, and protect the rights of all individuals, regardless of race, gender, religion, or sexual orientation. By standing united, communities can challenge systemic injustices and foster an inclusive society where everyone has the opportunity to thrive. This dedication not only improves the lives of those directly affected by inequality but also enriches the broader community by promoting a culture of mutual respect and understanding.

The fight for civil rights is a continuous journey that demands vigilance and perseverance. Historical gains can be eroded if not actively defended and expanded. Therefore, being “ALL IN” ensures that progress is maintained and built upon, preventing regression and inspiring future generations to continue the quest for justice. This unwavering commitment is crucial for creating a society that truly embodies the principles of equity and human dignity.

**“New” Attendee view:**

This was my first year as an APRI member and I attended the session for “New Attendees.” I got to meet Clayola Brown the president of APRI. She welcomed the new attendees and stated that this is “not a convention, it’s a conference. In the conference we get to know one another so we can confer with one another on the job that needs to be done, it’s a training session.

APRI is a Family: we’re not one color, we’re not one religion, we’re not one anything except One Family – and that’s everybody that came through the door.”

I left this session feeling empowered!

**Political Panel 2024 - What is at Stake?**

The first panel speaker was April Albright - Black Voters Matter



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April Albright has worked in the area of civil rights law, the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, where she served as a Supervising Attorney leading investigations, and she is currently the Legal Director and Acting Chief of Staff of Black Voters Matter Fund, which is an organization that seeks to build power in black and marginalized communities in over eleven states through electoral and issue organizing. In these roles she leads the organization's restorative justice work and voter protection litigation.

During her speech on the panel Ms. Albright stated that black people in this country have ALWAYS known what is at stake and this season is no different. But we KNOW that we play a role in whether or not this country is going to continue to become a democracy, because it's not a democracy and it's never been a democracy.

She let us know that The Declaration of Independence was penned for white men who were land owners. Not even all white men, but white male land owners who were protestant. Therefore, all the organizing that we do has always been to change it from "*that*" into something else. The battle that we undertake now is the same, and elections while it's not the **ONLY** tool for liberation; and let's be clear, you can't vote your way into being free - it's the important part of us continuing to get the kind of political representations that we need in this country in order to get the kind of laws that we need to protect each other. November becomes our way of continuing to protect each other as we build and we make this country into something that is more inclusive for us all.

So we need to start with a strategy, we need to start with discussing: "What are we going to do in November?"

This is where the conversation needs to start because things are awry.

What are we going to do as a collective community for November?

The second panel speaker was Carmen Dougherty, Esq, Advancement Project, Deputy Director



Carmen Daugherty joined Advancement Project as its new Deputy Executive Director in 2022. In this role, Carmen manages and supports directors in the Opportunity to Learn, Justice Project, and Power and Democracy programs and serves as the lead in cross-programmatic work.

She began her legal career as staff attorney and Deputy Director for a DC based special education advocacy organization. Carmen has served on the committees for the American Bar Association's section on Civil Rights and Social Justice as well as DC based youth justice advisory groups. Carmen received her undergraduate degree from Vassar College and her Juris Doctor from Tulane University School of Law.

She began her speech repeating the panel question..."What is at stake?" She states that for a brown, black, queer woman, union, disabled person everyday something's at stake. This changes nothing for us. The slogan says "Now till November"...NO it's now forever!

Our work really begins in November.



**Florida's State Democratic Senator Rosalind Osgood**, is president and CEO of non-profit Mount Olive Development Corp and served on the Broward County School Board for more than a decade. She gave a powerful speech regarding her past and how she didn't let her past stop her from continuing her work with the black community. She encouraged attendees to work to get out and vote. "The vote is the only way to make the change what we want and need." She's a firm believer of "keep pressing and always remember the past".



**Mike D. Payne APRI Southern Regional Rep and Florida AFL-CIO Secretary Treasurer** serves as Regional Director of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists and National Vice President of the A. Philip Randolph Institute. He serves on the National AFL-CIO Civil and Women's Rights Committee, Trustee of the Broward County AFL-CIO, Vice Chair of the Florida NAACP, Labor and Industry Committee, and Board member of the National Black Caucus of State Legislators' "Labor Roundtable". He is officially becoming the highest ranking African American in the state of Florida's organized labor movement. Mike had the group chanting "4 letter word that got to be heard"... "Vote, Vote" over a Busta Rhymes "If you really want to party with me". His unwavering belief is that union members must stay actively involved in their communities; stating: "If Unions are truly about UNITY, then that's exactly what we as union members should be bringing back into our communities... Working People UNITED, can NEVER be Defeated!!!"



## **Project 2025**

**Reverend Terrence Melvin, CBTU President** provided in depth information on Project 2025. Project 2025 is a 900-page document detailing proposed policies for a future Republican administration, developed by right-wing think tank the Heritage Foundation. Reverend Melvin provided the following key points:

- Proposes to remove civil service employment protections for thousands of federal employees to make them easier to fire and replace with Republican loyalists.
- Pressing NATO member of states to increase their military spending in order to confront threats from Russia.
- Federal government should prohibit Medicare from negotiating drug prices.
- Denial of gender-affirming care to transgender expletive.
- Eliminate insurance coverage of the morning-after pill.
- Accuses social media networks like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Tik Tok of jeopardizing young Americans mental health and social ties by creating a form of addiction.
- Abolishing Dept. of Homeland Security, TSA and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)
- Will arrest, detain and remove immigration violators anywhere in the United States.
- Ending same sex marriage.
- Remove protections against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation generally identity.
- Require Public school teachers to obtain permission from the student's legal parent to use the transgender student's preferred pronouns.
- Women reproductive health complete ban on abortion (regardless of the situation).
- Higher tax for middle class worker.
- Raising the retirement age.
- Eliminate the Departments of Education.
- Teach Christianity in school.
- Eliminate free lunch.
- Promote traditional families.
- Defund FBI.